Jury Points To Organized Crime Here

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By JACK DEMPSEY

The Orleans Parish Grand Jury said today in its outgoing report it has found evidence that organized crime exists in New Orleans with a high level of activity in gambling operations.

The jury, which is concluding it's six-month term, recommended two anti-crime laws be passed:

—Outlawing payoff pinball machines by making them contraband.

—Permitting use of wiretap under rigidly controlled conditions when it appears wiretap can help uncover the activities of organized crime.

The report of the jury, which was headed by Fernand S. Lapeyre, also noted that the greatest direct threat to the citizens of New Orleans is "crime in the streets."

The jury said it found that the rising rate of crime was being contributed to largely by juveniles. The outgoing report called for the immediate construction of a juvenile home in New Orleans — long a controversial matter.

IT ALSO told of plans for

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a community project where New Orleans clergy will be urged to become involved in the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders. The project is the idea of Rev. R. Jack Folis, Protestant chaplin at Parish Prison.

On organized crime, the jury noted it questioned large numbers of law enforcement officials and "informed citizens" before coming to the conclusion that organized crime does exist in New Orleans, "primarily in the area of handbook betting, layoff (wire service) operations, pinball machine gambling and to some extent, the sale and distribution of narcotics."

The report also suggested that the six-month term allowed a Grand Jury isn't sufficient to fully develop a probe in a complex area like organized crime.

IT NOTED:

"However, the jury as yet has been unable to develop proof of the links in the structure from the bottom to the higher echelons by which, purportedly, there is organized control of these activities."

The jury also praised New Orleans police for doing their best to cope with organized crime "within the limited resources available."

The jury also turned it's attention to the current bail bond controversy, where one company, Maryland National Insurance Company, owes $700,000 in uncollected forfeited bail bonds.

THE REPORT noted that bail bond companies need only deposit a $70,000 security with the state although their operations involve many times that amount.

The jury called on the legislature to pass laws requiring that bail bond companies be required to place deposits commensurate with their activities.

As have other juries in recent years, the outgoing jury blasted conditions at Parish Prison, noting the need for a new prison and the inability of any administration to cope with the present overcrowded conditions.

THE REPORT said it has confirmed that dope and narcotics are routinely smuggled into the prison, usually during visiting hours.

The jury warned that deteriorating conditions might make a mass breakout from the prison "inevitable" unless the City Council comes up with more funds for additional deputies.

The report also called for a review of Louisiana's laws governing grand juries. It said there ought to be a continuity from one grand jury to another so that investigations can be smoothly continued.